

Message Text

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MANILA PASS ADB

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SUBJ: TARBELA DAM UPDATE

SUMMARY: VISIT TO EMBASSY OF RESREP OF UK ENGINEERING FIRM, SIR ALEXANDER GIBBS, AND SUBSEQUENT EMBOFF VISIT TO TARBELA INDICATE THAT REPAIRS TO STILLING BASIN OF TUNNEL THREE ARE PROCEEDING AS PLANNED ON VERY TIGHT SCHEDULE TO BE COMPLETE BY MAY ONE. POWERHOUSE MECHANICAL INSTALLATION IS COMPLETE BUT ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION AND TESTING WILL DELAY FIRST POWER GENERATION UNTIL MARCH. THE FIFTH TUNNEL IS OPERATING WITHOUT PROBLEMS AND SLOWLY DRAWING DOWN THE RESERVOIR. SINKHOLES IN THE IMPERVIOUS BLANKET UPSTREAM FROM THE DAM AND THE ONE SINKHOLE IN THE DAM FACE HAVE ALL STABILIZED AND CAUSE NO WORRY. END SUMMARY.

1. STILLING BASIN: CONTRACTOR IS PRESSING FORWARD ON REPAIRS TO THE STILLING BASIN OF TUNNEL THREE WITH HOPES OF COMPLETION BEFORE THE MAY ONE DEADLINE FOR RELEASE OF IRRIGATION WATERS THROUGH THAT TUNNEL AND TUNNEL FOUR. CONCRETE MONOLITHS HAVE BEEN POURED ON THE BASIN FLOORS.
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 ISLAMA 13009 221352Z

CREWS ARE PRESNELTY DRILLING THROUGH THIS CONCRETE TO ROCK ABOUT 90 FEET UNDER THE BASIN FLOORS. CABLES WILL BE ANCHORED BETWEEN THIS ROCK AND THE BASIN FLOORS AND STRESSED TO THREE MILLION POUNDS PER CABLE. IT IS BELIEVED THAT ONE OF THE EARLIER PROBLEMS IN THE STILLING BASINS WAS NON-SYNCHRONOUS MOVEMENT OF THE MASSIVE BLOCKS OF CONCRETE.

THE STRESSED CABLES SHOULD ELIMINATE THIS PROBLEM.

2. THE CONTRACTORS ARE AWAITING ARRIVAL FROM THE US OF A SHIPLOAD OF THREE INCH STEEL FIBERS. THESE WILL BE MIXED WITH CONCRETE AND POURED IN A 20-INCH SLAB OVER THE STILLING BASIN FLOOR TO RESIST WEAR AND CAVITATION. AN AIR TROUGH IS BEING TO REDUCE CAVITATION. IF THESE REPAIRS PROVE SUCCESSFUL DURING THE LATE SPRING AND EARLY SUMMER IRRIGATION RELEASE SEASON, SOME OF THE SAME PROCEDURES WILL BE FOLLOWED IN THE TUNNEL FOUR BASIN NEXT FALL AND WINTER WHILE THE SPILLWAY AND TUNNEL FIVE ARE SUFFICIENT FOR IRRIGATION RELEASE.

3. POWERHOUSE: ALL MECHANICAL INSTALLATION IS COMPLETE AT THE POWERHOUSE BUT ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION AND TESTING WILL DELAY POWER PRODUCTION UNTIL LATE MARCH. THE FIRST TURBINE WILL PROBABLY SPIN IN FEBRUARY. ALL ELECTRICAL AND CONTROL EQUIPMENT HAS BEEN DELIVERED TO THE POWERHOUSE INCLUDING THE LOCALLY PROCURED ITEMS WHICH CAUSED THE DELAY. THERE IS SOME CONCERN THAT WAPDA MAY HAVE PROMISED UNDULY EARLY DATES FOR POWER PRODUCTION. HOWEVER, THOSE INVOLVED AT THE SITE ARE FIRMLY RESOLVED TO CAREFULLY FOLLOW REQUIRED TESTING PROCEDURES AND TO PHASE-IN THE FOUR TURBINES AT MONTHLY INTERVALS.

4. FIFTH TUNNEL: THE FIFTH TUNNEL HAS BEEN OPERATING WITHOUT PROBLEM FOR ABOUT EIGHT MONTHS. THIS TUNNEL IS MEETING ALL PRESENT IRRIGATION RELEASE REQUIREMENTS. SINCE ENGINEERS BELIEVE THAT SOME OF THE PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED IN THE FIRST FOUR TUNNELS WERE CAUSED BY THE TUNNELS BEING ONLY PARTIALLY OPENED, TUNNEL FIVE IS BEING OPERATED AT FULL CAPACITY BUT UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 ISLAMA 13009 221352Z

DURING NIGHT HOURS ONLY. THIS PERMITS INSPECTION AND ANY NECESSARY PATCHING DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS.

5. SINKHOLES: SINKHOLES FORMATION RATE IS NOW VIRTUALLY ZERO BUT DUMPING OF FILL MATERIALS IN THE IMPERVIOUS BLANKET CONTINUES. THERE WAS SOME CONCERN IN SEPTEMBER WHEN A TWELVE-FOOT DIAMETER SINKHOLE ON THE UPSTREAM FACE OF THE DAM WAS NOTED IN A SONAR PICTURE. AN IMMEDIATE REVIEW WAS MADE OF ALL EARLIER SONAR PICTURES AND THE SINKHOLE WAS FOUND TO EXIST IN A JUNE READING. SINCE THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE SINCE THAT JUNE READING, ENGINEERS BELIEVE THE HOLE GIVES NO CAUSE FOR CONCERN. REGULAR SONAR READINGS OF IT ARE BEING TAKEN AND THE SPOT WILL BE CLEAR FOR INSPECTION WHEN THE LAKE IS DRAWN DOWN TO ITS LOWEST LEVEL IN EARLY SUMMER. CONSTABLE

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